

-1-

SPECIFICATION

TITLE

Wireless Receiver Mounting System For Video Cameras

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This patent application is claiming the benefit of previously filed provisional patent application #60/437,681 which is for the current invention and has a filing date of 01/03/2003.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

a. Field of Invention

This invention relates to video cameras; specifically to a bracket system for mounting wireless microphone receivers and other accessories to a video camera.

b. Prior Art

In the field of video production, a camera operator often operates a video camera while it is mounted to an adjustable camera tripod. This allows the operator to pan the camera from side to side and tilt the camera up and down in a smooth and steady fashion. A camera operator will sometimes carry the camera by hand or on their shoulder, allowing them to move about freely. It is common to attach accessories such as lights, microphones, and wireless microphone receivers to the video camera, allowing the camera operator to quickly switch back and forth between "tripod mounted" and "hand held" use. Recently, professional quality video cameras have become very small in size, leaving little or no room on the camera for mounting accessories. This presented a

-2-

problem for the camera operators who now had to mount wireless microphone receivers on their waist or on the camera tripod. Mounting the receiver on their waist often caused poor reception as the antennae are often blocked from the transmitted signal. The operator would also be connected to the camera with a tangle of wires making it difficult step away from the camera while it is mounted on the tripod. In the case where the wireless microphone receiver is mounted on the tripod, the camera operator is unable to detach the camera from the tripod and move about freely during hand held operation.

Some related, yet vastly different inventions include the following:

The wireless microphone receiver holder in patent 389,154 attaches over the battery of a full size video camera and is limited to use with full size video cameras. It is not able to fit on the smaller camera batteries found on modern smaller video cameras.

The video camera bracket in patent 6,601,999 is suitable for mounting some accessories, but does not include any apparatus to directly mount wireless microphone receivers. When patent 6,601,999 refers to a "tripod", it is referring to the three legs of the camera bracket. The video camera bracket in patent 6,601,999 interferes with the use of a camera tripod, which is a standard accessory for a video camera, thus defeating the purpose of mounting accessories on the camera bracket. The inventor of this invention probably didn't think of a suitable system for mounting wireless microphone receivers during tripod use because the invention's main purpose is to provide additional handles for holding the video camera by hand.

The support for video camera in patent 5,612,756 has a bar which may be suitable for mounting some accessories, but due

-3-

to its limited mounting system and interference with tripod use, is unsuitable for mounting wireless microphone receivers. The inventor of this invention probably didn't think of a suitable system for mounting wireless microphone receivers during tripod use because the invention's main purpose is to provide a shoulder mount for holding a video camera by hand.

The harness in patent 338,999 is a carrying case designed for transportation of video equipment and is not related to mounting wireless microphone receivers on a video camera.

The hand held video camera support in patent 5,064,109 is designed for video camera use without a tripod and does not provide a means of attaching accessories such as wireless microphone receivers.

The video camera accessory apparatus in patent 5,189,520 is designed to attach a TV tuner unit to the camera and does not provide a means of attaching accessories such as wireless microphone receivers.

The accessory shoe adapter in patent 5,068,683 is designed to mount to a video camera's battery connector. It can attach to a limited variety of video cameras and can attach a limited number of accessories such as a light. This shoe adapter does not include a mounting system for wireless microphone receivers and may cause damage to the battery connection system of the camera if the weight of mounted accessories is excessive.

The video camera carrying handle in patent 5,121,147 is designed to provide a handle to carry the video camera while allowing a battery and light to be attached but does not provide a means of attaching accessories such as wireless microphone receivers.

-4-

c. Objects and Advantages

Accordingly, several objects and advantages of my invention include the following:

My invention mounts the wireless receivers to the video camera, allowing the camera operator to easily mount and leave the camera on a tripod or quickly remove the tripod and move about freely for hand held operation of the camera.

My invention mounts the wireless microphone receivers on the right side of the video camera, in front of the camera's tripod mounting holes in such a position as not to impede use of the video camera or wireless receivers.

My invention includes a versatile wireless microphone receiver mounting system, designed to accept most available wireless microphone receivers which were designed for use on a video camera.

My invention includes a recessed camera mounting screw as part of it's video camera mounting system, allowing for full functionality of it's tripod mounting system, also included on my invention.

My invention is light in weight as not to burden the camera operator during hand held use of the camera.

In addition to wireless microphone receivers, my invention can be used to attach a variety of other accessories.

Further objects and advantages of my invention will become apparent from a consideration of the drawings and ensuing description.

-5-

SUMMARY

The purpose of the present invention is to provide a suitable means for mounting wireless microphone receivers to a small video camera in such a way that allows full use and function of the video camera, camera controls, and wireless microphone receiver, while also allowing the camera operator to easily switch between hand held camera operation and tripod mounted operation.

-6-

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the invention shown in use with a video camera and two wireless microphone receivers.

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the invention

FIG. 3-A is a perspective view of the preferred embodiment of the invention shown in an exploded view.

FIG. 3-B is a perspective view of a second embodiment of the invention shown in an exploded view.

FIG. 4 is an exploded, partial view in detail of the preferred embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 5 is an exploded partial sectional view in detail of the preferred embodiment of the invention.

-7-

LIST OF REFERENCE NUMERALS

- 10 - video camera
- 12 - wireless microphone receiver
- 14 - mounting bracket
- 16 - second embodiment of mounting bracket
- 18 - adapter box
- 19 - second embodiment of adapter box
- 20 - adapter plate
- 21 - second embodiment of adapter plate
- 22 - alignment plate
- 23 - screw
- 24 - flat head screw
- 25 - mounting holes
- 26 - mounting slots
- 27 - resilient non-skid pad
- 28 - retainer clip
- 29 - foot
- 30 - tripod mounting hole
- 32 - tripod alignment hole
- 34 - threaded hole
- 36 - hollow pockets
- 38 - alignment pin
- 40 - recessed screw pocket
- 42 - camera mounting screw
- 44 - spring clip
- 46 - PEM threaded insert
- 48 - access hole
- 50 - rivet
- 52 - spring
- 54 - tab
- 56 - auxiliary mounting holes
- 59 - strap slot
- 62 - resilient rubber pad
- 64 - hook and loop strap

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The present invention relates to a bracket system for attaching wireless microphone receivers and other accessories to a video camera. Fig. 1 shows a perspective view of the invention attached to a video camera 10 and two wireless microphone receivers 12a and 12b. From the video camera operator's point of view, the invention mounts wireless microphone receivers 12a and 12b high on the right side of the video camera, towards the front. This position allows for full functionality of the video camera and wireless receivers, without obstructing any of the controls.

Fig. 2 shows a perspective view of the bracket system which is comprised of a platform section, where the video camera is mounted; a vertical section where the wireless microphone receivers and other accessories are mounted; and a plurality of adapter box 18 and adapter plate 20, which can be used to aid in mounting wireless microphone receivers and other accessories to the vertical wall section.

Fig. 3A shows an exploded perspective view of the preferred embodiment of the invention. The horizontal platform section of the invention is comprised of alignment plate 22 which is attached to mounting bracket 14 with flat head screw 24 into threaded hole 34. In the preferred embodiment of the invention, mounting bracket 14 is stamped from a sheet, approximately 0.1 inches thick, of lightweight metal such as aluminum; alignment plate 22 is machined from a bar of lightweight metal such as aluminum. Camera mounting screw 42 passes through both alignment plate 22 and mounting bracket 14, and screws into the existing mounting holes on the bottom of a video camera. Retainer clip 28 is attached to camera mounting screw 42, holding it in place when the invention is not in use. Alignment pin 38 is pressed into alignment plate 22 and passes through mounting bracket 14 into an alignment

-9-

hole in the bottom of a video camera, keeping the the invention from rotating while attached to the camera. Resilient non-skid pad 27 consists of a thin sheet of resilient material such as rubber, with an adhesive backing holding it in place on mounting bracket 14. Resilient non-skid pad 27 helps produce a snug fit between the camera and the invention, preventing vibration or twisting. Foot 29 is an injection molded rubber grommet which keeps the camera and bracket system level when set on a flat surface.

Fig. 4 shows a close up perspective view of alignment plate 22. Recessed screw pocket 40 is on the underside of alignment plate 22, and allows camera mounting screw 42 to be recessed within alignment plate 22, sitting flush with the bottom of alignment plate 22. Tripod mounting hole 30 and tripod alignment hole 32 pass completely through alignment plate 22. Tripod mounting hole 30 is threaded with a stainless steel insert for durability. Tripod mounting hole 30 and tripod alignment hole 32 are similar to the mounting holes found of the bottom of a video camera, allowing accessories such as a tripod, to be mounted to the invention while installed on the camera. In order to shift the weight of the camera back for better balance while mounted on a tripod, tripod mounting hole 30 and tripod alignment hole 32 are placed in front of camera mounting screw 42 and alignment pin 38. Fig. 4 also shows hollow pockets 36 which function to lighten the weight of alignment plate 22.

As shown in fig. 3A, the invention's vertical section has a pattern of mounting holes 25 and mounting slots 26a and 26b, which conform to the bolt patterns of many wireless microphone receiver mounts. Adapter box 18 and adapter plate 20 connect to mounting bracket 14 with a set of screws 23, through the mounting holes 25 and mounting slot 26a. Adapter box 18 or adapter plate 20 can be attached directly to mounting bracket 14, either individually, or in any combination of two. Adapter box 18 and adapter plate 20 are

-10-

used to mount wireless microphone receivers which were not equipped with suitable mounting hardware to connect directly to mounting bracket 14.

Fig. 5 shows a close up, perspective, sectional view of adapter box 18 and adapter plate 20. The preferred embodiment of adapter box 18 includes a box, open at the top and bottom, stamped and bent from lightweight sheet of metal such as aluminum. Tab 54a prevents a wireless microphone receiver from slipping through the box. Rivets 50 attach spring clip 44 and spring 52 to the inside of adapter box 18. Spring clip 44 and spring 52 compress to hold a variety of different size wireless microphone receivers firmly against the opposite walls of adapter box 18. These opposite walls are covered with an adhesive backed fabric or felt, to protect the wireless microphone receiver from being scratched. Ridges at the top of spring clip 44 prevent the wireless microphone receiver from coming out the top of the box unless the spring tension is released by pushing back the top of spring clip 44. Adapter box 18 has a system of mounting holes on 2 opposite sides. In the preferred embodiment, four PEM threaded inserts 46a are stainless steel threaded inserts. Access holes 48 provide access to the interior of adapter box 18 in order to attach another adapter box 18 or an adapter plate 20.

The preferred embodiment of adapter plate 20 includes a flat, vertical section formed from a sheet of metal such as aluminum, with tab 54b at the bottom. Two resilient rubber pads 62 are attached to adapter plate 20 and provide a surface which conforms to the shape of the wireless microphone receiver, helping to keep it in place. Hook and loop strap 64 is threaded through strap slots 59 and holds the wireless microphone receiver securely against the resilient rubber pads 62. Four PEM threaded inserts 46b are

-11-

used to mount adapter plate 20 to the bracket system. Two auxiliary mounting holes 56 allow two mounting plates 20 to be attached back to back on either side of mounting bracket 14.

Fig. 3B shows an exploded perspective view of another embodiment of the invention. A second embodiment of mounting bracket 16, adapter box 19, or adapter plate 21 could be formed by die casting or injection mold using a lightweight material such as aluminum, plastic, or a composite material. In addition, a second embodiment of adapter box 19 could be fabricated from an extruded piece of aluminum.

Thus the reader will see that my invention provides a lightweight, sturdy, universal mounting system for wireless microphone receivers and accessories which can be easily used by any video camera operator.

While the above description contains many specificities, these should not be construed as limitations on the scope of the invention, but rather as an exemplification of one preferred embodiment thereof. Many other variations and uses are possible. For example, my invention can be used to hold a number of different accessories such as microphones and lights, with or without additional adapter bracket. My invention could be used as a handle for holding the camera.

Accordingly, the scope of the invention should be determined not by the embodiments illustrated, but by the appended claims and their legal equivalents.